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Kirk: "By rejecting the *Medical Rights Act*, Speaker Pelosi will allow the federal government to come between you and your doctor."

Pelosi bill raises taxes \$700 billion as U.S. unemployment rate tops 10%;

1,990-page bill cuts \$100 billion from Medicare hospitals, \$100 billion from Medicare doctors, \$100 billion from Medicare Advantage and even cuts Medicare skilled nursing, hospice and wheelchairs

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) tonight voted against Speaker Pelosi's trillion-dollar 1,990-page government health care bill, just hours after House leaders refused to allow an up-or-down vote on the congressman's amendment to prohibit the government from coming between patients and their doctors.

On Friday night, Congressman Kirk offered H.R. 2516, the *Medical Rights Act*, as an amendment to the Speaker Pelosi's bill (H.R. 3970). The *Medical Rights Act*

would prohibit the government from compromising the doctor-patient relationship, delaying service or denying care. Despite the Speaker's floor remarks declaring her bill "puts you and your doctor in charge," the Speaker refused to put her words into law.

"Nothing is more important than your relationship with your doctor," said Congressman Kirk, who worked over the last 10 months to develop a centrist Republican alternative to lower health care costs and expand coverage. "Despite repeated pledges that a government takeover of health care would not compromise the doctor-patient relationship, Speaker Pelosi refused to put the issue to a vote. By rejecting the *Medical Rights Act*, Speaker Pelosi opted to allow the federal government to come between you and your doctor."

After holding 18 live and telephone town hall meetings, and consulting with dozens of patient, doctor, hospital and employer representatives, Congressman Kirk introduced the *Medical Rights and Reform Act*, H.R. 3970. Among its provisions, this centrist reform alternative would:

1. Adopt the *Medical Rights Act*, prohibiting the government from interfering with decisions made by you and your doctor;
1. Cut billions of dollars in waste, fraud and abuse;
1. End defensive medicine by enacting lawsuit reform and expanding electronic medical records;
1. Allow Americans to buy cheaper and more flexible health insurance from any state in the nation;
1. Give individuals who buy their own insurance the same tax break employers receive;
1. Promote innovative state programs to insure high-risk pools and end pre-existing conditions; and
1. Not raise taxes, add to the deficit or cut Medicare.

The Pelosi health care bill narrowly passed the House 220 to 215 with 39 Democrats voting against it. The bill would:

- cut \$400 billion from senior health care under Medicare, including a \$100 billion cut to Medicare hospitals, a \$100 billion cut to Medicare doctors, a \$100 billion cut to Medicare Advantage and other cuts to Medicare skilled nursing, hospice and even wheelchairs;
- raise taxes by more than \$700 billion, pushing the top marginal rate in Illinois to 49.9%, or four percentage points higher than France; and
- establish more than 100 new government programs.

“Tonight, Republicans offered a clear alternative to lower health care costs by 10 percent while preserving the quality of American medicine – without raising taxes, putting more Americans out of work and cutting billions from Medicare.” Congressman Kirk said. “We showed the American people that we are not the party of no – we are the party of better.”

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